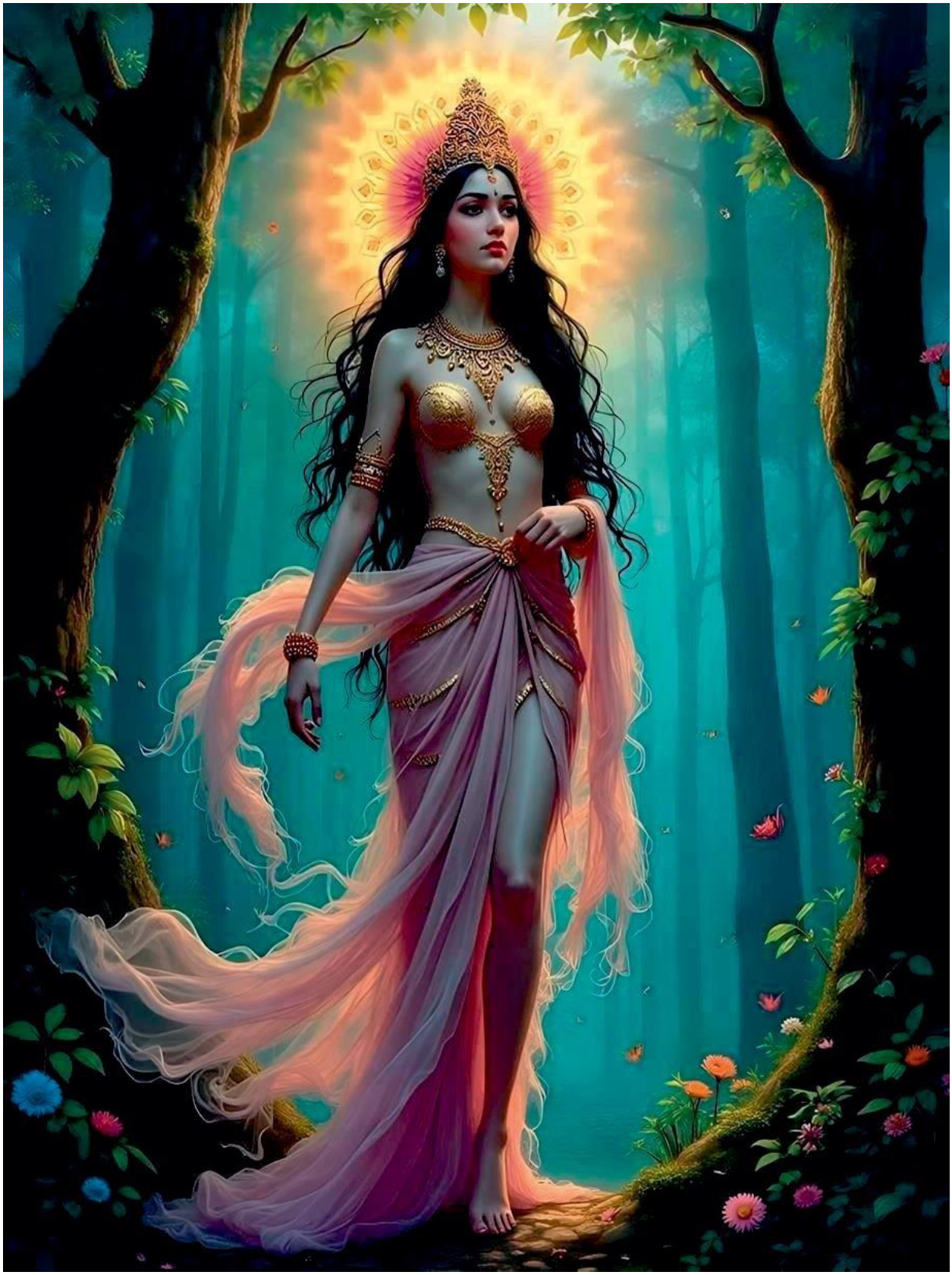
SHAKTI GITA



The supreme goddess that creates everything.
That source of all, I worship.
I meditate on that in the form of a divine light.
May this light illuminate our intellect!

INTRODUCTION

The scholars have struggled to understand ‘Hinduism’, a faith whose followers seemed to be crazy because they worshiped a large number of gods and goddesses as the supreme. A religion vastly diverse in its beliefs, practices, and the ways of worship. Some labeled hinduism as polytheistic, while others even coined new terms like henotheism to describe this baffling array of spiritual traditions. Few however have realized, and fewer still have written that ‘Sanātana Dharma’ or the eternal faith, known today as hinduism, is a family of religions with four principal sects; ‘Shākta’, ‘Shaiva’, ‘Vaishnava’ and ‘Smārta’. This single perception is crucial for understanding the hinduism and explaining it accurately.

Contrary to the prevailing misconceptions, we must know that hindus worship one supreme deity, though by the different names and forms. For Shākta, Mother Shakti is the supreme. For Shaiva, Lord Shiva is the supreme. For Vaishnava, Lord Vishnu is the supreme. For Smārta, the liberal hindus, the choice of deity is left to the devotee.

Each sect has a multitude of lineages, sacred literatures, the religious leaders, monastic communities, pilgrimage centers and a number of temples. They possess huge wealth of art, architecture and philosophy. These sects hold such divergent beliefs that each is an independent and complete religion in itself. Yet, they share a vast heritage of culture and common beliefs; reincarnation, temple worship, manifold deities, guru shishya tradition, and the Vedas as their scriptural authority.

Each of philosophies, schools, and lineages shares a common purpose to enhance the soul's journey towards purity and perfection known as 'Moksha' or the liberation. Let's discuss all the sects one by one.

Shākta worship the supreme as the divine mother, Shakti or Devi. The supreme mother has many forms. Some are gentle and others are fierce. Shākta use chanting, holy diagrams, yoga and rituals to call forth the cosmic energy and awaken the great kundalini power within the spinal cord.

Shaiva worship the supreme as Lord Shiva. They give the foremost importance to self-discipline and philosophy. They practice yoga and worship in the temples, striving to be one with Shiva itself.

Vaishnava worship the supreme as Lord Vishnu and the incarnations, mostly Krishna and Rāma. They practice the complete surrender and worship in temples, always striving to please the Lord.

Smārta worship all the major hindu gods and goddesses. Hence, they are also known as liberal hindus. They follow the path of philosophy and meditation that emphasizes on our oneness with the universe or the divine through rational understanding.

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Om Shri Mā-tré Na-maḥ

You are my mother and father as well.
You are my family and friends as well.
You are my wisdom and wealth as well.
You are everything, O world mother!

CHAPTER 1

BIRTH OF PĀRVATI

[1] King said: O Sage! You told me that the supreme light took birth on the earth. Now, describe in detail about that supreme power. No intelligent human can avoid listening to those liberating words.

[2] The death may come even to the demigods who drink nectar, but certainly no such danger can come to those who carefully listen to the divine mother's glorious deeds.

[3] Sage said: O King! You are blessed that you have been taught by the great souls. You are so fortunate since you are sincerely devoted to the supreme mother, Ādi Shakti.

[4] Now, hear an ancient story. Once Lord Shiva was wandering all over the world in pain carrying Sati's body burnt by fire.

[5] Whenever Shiva relaxed, he would become lifeless absorbed in the meditation of the Shakti's forms, forgetting about the world.

[6] The three worlds with their objects; moving and unmoving, with oceans, mountains, and islands became void of prosperity and power.

[7] Without any trace of joy, the heart of all beings became dried up. They remained always miserable, burdened with anxious thoughts.

[8] All submerged in an ocean of sorrow and became diseased. The demigods had lost their fortunes.

[9] The kings were attacked with a series of misfortunes, losing both, the material and spiritual wealth. At that time, a demon named Tarka became unconquerable after receiving a boon from Lord Brahmā.

[10] Being intoxicated by his powers, he conquered the three worlds. The boon he received stated that the child of Shiva and Shakti only would be able to kill him.

[11] At that time, Shiva had no child. Hence, the great demon elated with joy became infatuated with his powers.

[12] All the demigods were banished from their palaces by that great demon. They remained always anxious and fearful.

[13] Lord Shiva has no wife now. How can he then have a child? We are very unfortunate indeed. Thus, being oppressed with the anxious thoughts, all demigods went to the ‘Vaikuntha’ and informed Lord Vishnu of all that had happened.

[14] Vishnu said: Why are you so anxious when the goddess of the universe, the yielder of all desires is always wakeful for us?

[15] It is due to our mistakes that the divine mother is showing her disregard. It is meant to teach us and make us stronger.

[16] When a mother frightens and scolds a child, it is not that she has become merciless. So, the world mother, the controller of the universe will never be merciless to us regardless of our vices.

[17] A child keeps making mistakes all the time. Who can tolerate that in this world except the mother?

[18] Therefore, you take refuge in the supreme mother with sincere devotion. Mā Shakti will certainly grant whatever you desire.

[19] Thus, after assuring the demigods, Lord Vishnu along with his consort Devi Lakshmi and others went out to worship Shakti.

[20] After reaching the Himālaya, they soon engaged themselves in doing the act of worship.

[21] O King! Those who were well versed in the performance of the sacrifices to the divine mother began their sacrificial ceremonies and all started to take holy decisions.

[22] Thus, some devoted themselves to singing hymns and chanting the numerous names of the divine mother. Others were immersed in meditation of the Shakti's forms.

[23] Some were committed to chanting mantras. Some were engaged in severe penances. Others were focused on the mental sacrifices.

[24] Also, some began to worship the goddess of the universe by the seed mantra of māyā. Thus, several years passed.

[25] The ninth day of the month of 'Chaitra' on Friday, the supreme light of the greatest force suddenly appeared in front of them.

[26] That great light was equal to the crores of lightning streaks, and cool like the crores of moons. The luster was like the crores of suns combined. The Vedas personified were chanting hymns all around.

[27] The supreme light was above, below, on all sides, in the middle and nowhere it was obstructed.

[28] The divine light had no beginning, nor end. The appearance was not that of a male or a female, nor that of a hermaphrodite.

[29] O King! The demigods first closed their eyes in fright, but at the next moment regaining some courage when they opened their eyes, they beheld a wondrous sight.

[30] They found the formless supreme light manifesting in the form of an extremely beautiful divine woman.

[31] Her blooming youth and the fully rounded breasts; upraised and noticeable, added to beauty all around.

[32] The lovely ornaments on her slim waist were making tinkling sounds. The line of hair over her navel gave additional beauty.

[33] The bracelets were on her hands and the beautiful anklets were on her feet. The necklace made up of invaluable jewels and pearls spread a very bright luster all around.

[34] The locks of hair flowing between her ear and cheek sparkled bright like the black bees shining over a white flower. The diamond earrings were suspended like the lines on the moon.

[35] On her head, there was a golden crown decked with invaluable gems and stones. Her forehead was pasted with the saffron drops.

[36] There was a crescent moon on her forehead. Her eyebrows were extended and her red eyes were shining in a playful mood. Her nose was elevated and lips were very sweet. Her teeth were very beautiful like the opening buds of white jasmine flower. Her mouth was filled with betel leaves and edible camphor.

[37] On her one hand; there was the noose and on her other hand; there was the goad. Her two other hands made signs granting boons and dispelling fears. Her body shed a very bright aura. Her clothing is red colored. All these added great beauties all around.

[38] The mother of the universe, the enchantress of all, very sweet, ever smiling, yielding all desires, worshiped by all the demigods and indicative of all lovely feelings.

[39] Thus, the demigods saw before them the mother goddess, the incarnate of infinite mercy, with a face ready to offer her grace. The demigods bowed as soon as they saw her.

[40] Seeing that form of the divine mother filled with compassion. All demigods choked with emotion, unable to speak, shed tears in silence with their heads bent low.

[41] Having somehow controlled themselves, they chanted hymns to the world mother with the tears of love in the eyes.

[42] Demigods said: Salutations to you, the great goddess! We bow down to you. Our eternal salutations!

[43] You reside as a divine light in the forehead of a yogi. You are worshiped by all beings for the reward of their actions.

[44] Always burning with wisdom, shining everywhere as the pure consciousness, we take refuge in goddess Durgā. We bow down to goddess Tārā, help us in crossing this terrible ocean of the world.

[45] We have created the words and languages by your grace so that we can praise you and chant hymns to you.

[46] You are like Kalpavriksha, the heavenly tree yielding all desires, who nourishes the whole world. Also, you are the night of destruction at the end of time, who turns everything into the ash. We surrender to goddess Kāli, O Mother! Kindly be pleased with us.

[47] You are Sarasvati, the power of Brahmā. You are Lakshmi, the power of Vishnu. You are Pārvati, the power of Shiva. Thus, O Devi! You purify the world in various forms and give peace to all.

[48] O Bhagavati! We meditate on you as the power of all beings. Illuminate us so that we can progress in our wisdom and know you.

[49] O Shakti! Salutations to your gross cosmic form; To the subtle form that threads all. Salutations to your unmanifested form. You are the embodiment of 'Paramātmā' or the supreme soul.

[50] Your ignorance causes delusion in humans. You are the māyā under whose influence this whole world is created.

[51] You are the essence of consciousness. You are the eternal bliss whom the Vedas describe as one's sole purpose in life. We bow down again and again to your lotus feet.

[52] We bow down to the one who is beyond the five bodily sheaths (Physical, Energy, Mental, Wisdom, and Bliss), one who is witness to the three states (Waking, Dream, and Sleep), and one who resides in all beings in the form of 'Ātmā' or the soul.

[53] O Devi! You are 'Om' in the mantras, also you are the 'Hrim' seed mantra. You are the most compassionate and merciful.

[54] Thus, praised by the demigods. Bhagavati spoke in a very sweet voice resembling a joyous cuckoo bird.

[55] Devi said: O Wise Ones! What do you want? I am always yours, ready to grant boons to my devotees.

[56] You are my devotees. Then, why do you care when I'm on your side? I will rescue you from the ocean of troubles. Know my words to be true.

[57] Hearing the words of deep love, the demigods became very glad and their minds were put to rest.

[58] Demigods said: O Devi! You are omniscient. What is there in the three worlds that is not known to you?

[59] O Mother! Tārkāsura, the lord of all the demons, is giving us troubles day and night.

[60] Brahmā has given him the boon that he will be killed by Shiva and Shakti's child only. Also, Sati, the wife of Shiva has cast aside her body. Hence, Shiva doesn't have a consort now.

[61] What will the ignorant tell the omniscient one? O Mother! We have described in brief all that we could say. What more shall we say? You know all our troubles and the cause of our sorrow.

[62] Bless us so that our devotion remains unflinching at your lotus feet, this is our earnest prayer. O Mother! You assume a body to have Shiva's child is our fervent prayer.

[63] Devi said: I'll soon incarnate as Pārvati in the house of mountain king Himavān. She will be Shiva's wife and will beget a child that would destroy Tārkāsura and will solve your problem. Also, your devotion will remain steadfast at my lotus feet.

[64] King Himavān with complete devotion worships me in his heart. Therefore, it gives me immense pleasure to take birth in his house without any doubt.

[65] Sage said: O King! Hearing the kind words of Devi, the king of mountains was filled with love, and with tears in his eyes spoke to the goddess of the three worlds.

[66] Himavān said: On whom you shower grace; you make them greater. Otherwise, I am so dull and unworthy, whereas you are the pure consciousness of the nature of existence, intelligence, and bliss.

[67] O Sinless One! Becoming your father after the crores of births is not possible without your grace, even with the merits of penances and meditations combined.

[68] Oh! What a favor you have done for me! Henceforth, my fame will spread throughout the universe that ‘The world mother is born as daughter to Himavān’.

[69] One whose belly contains the millions of universes should be my daughter. Who can be so blessed and fortunate?

[70] In whose family exists a blessed person like me, my ancestors had accumulated so much merits. I cannot imagine those heavenly realms created for my ancestors to dwell.

[71] O Supreme Ruler! You are the goal of Vedānta. Now, describe to me your real self as exemplified in the Vedas. O Mother! Tell me, how I may finally merge with you?

CHAPTER 2
MĀTĀ AND MĀYĀ

[1] Sage said: O King! Thus, praised by Himavān, the goddess of the universe gracefully began to reveal secrets that are concealed in the authentic scriptures.

[2] Mother said: O Immortal Ones! Hear my words with attention and devotion that I am now going to speak, hearing which will enable you to realize my true essence.

[3] Before the creation, I, only I existed, nothing else existed then. My real self is called pure consciousness.

[4] My true self is beyond thought, beyond any name, without any comparison, beyond birth, beyond death, or any other change. I have one inherent power called māyā.

[5] The māyā is neither true nor false, nor can it be called both. This illusion of māyā ever exists till the moksha is achieved.

[6] Māyā naturally arises from me as heat comes out of fire, hot light comes out of the sun and cool light comes out of the moon.

[7] I am formless. But when I am united with the māyā, I take various forms, the great cause of this world.

[8] The māyā is divided into two types; one is called pure māyā or the knowledge and the other is called impure māyā or the ignorance.

[9] The pure māyā protects its devotees and gives liberation whereas the impure māyā hides me, its originator, and thus creates suffering for all beings.

[10] Māyā when manifested in the form of the five elements is the material cause of the universe. Some call her ignorance and illusion. Others call her nature and energy.

[11] Māyā can be experienced through the sense organs. Hence, it is considered true. Also, the knowledge it conveys is destroyed in time. Hence, it is considered false.

[12] The pure consciousness cannot be experienced through the senses. Hence, the consciousness is self-luminous and is not illumined by any other outside source.

[13] The consciousness illuminates what is other than itself. Hence, the pure consciousness is self-luminous and it illuminates the sun, the moon, and all other forms.

[14] O Himavān! The waking, dream, and sleep states cannot remain constant but the sense of 'I' remains the same. Hence, the witness by which the absence of objects is experienced in deep sleep is eternal.

[15] Even if we suppose consciousness could be experienced, then by whom would it be experienced? That witness which experiences alone remains as the pure consciousness.

[16] Saints have time and again declared that the pure consciousness is eternal. It is the only source of supreme love.

[17] ‘I am’ feeling is deeply established inside every being. Thus, it is evident that I am a continuous flow of awareness without any interval. Also, I am quite separate from the perceived world.

[18] I am therefore considered to be a complete and undivided whole. The consciousness is not a quality of the self, since that would make an object of the self.

[19] The consciousness does not have any qualities. Also, it is not separate from the self. Hence, the consciousness is the self.

[20] Since, it is unattached to anything and always devoid of duality. Therefore, its essence is eternal bliss.

[21] The eternal soul however by its māyā attaches to the desires and actions according to the past tendencies.

[22] Māyā is not separate from the soul. Desirous to create, the entire world is created inside the consciousness out of ignorance.

[23] In all the scriptures, the pure consciousness is declared to be the cause of everything. It is considered the original source. Its essence is existence, intelligence, and bliss.

[24] Where all desire, knowledge and action are melted in one, that is the mantra ‘Hrim’. It is the first principle of the universe.

[25] From ‘Hrim’ comes sky with the sound property, then air with the sound and touch property. Then comes fire with the sound, touch and form property. Next came water with the sound, touch, form and taste property. And lastly came earth with all five properties; sound, touch, form, taste and smell.

[26] From the five elements, the subtle body is created which is all pervading. The unmanifested form is called the causal body.

[27] The gross body is the result of a mixture of all five elements in different proportions. The sense organs arise from the sattva guna of each of the five elements.

[28] The sattva guna of the sense organs unite to become the internal organs. According to its functions, this is of four types.

[29] When the internal organ is engaged in willing or doubting, it is called ‘Mana’ or the mind. When it is free from doubts and arrives at a conclusion, it is called ‘Buddhi’ or the intellect.

[30] When it is engaged in recollection of the past events, it is called ‘Chitta’ or the memory. Whereas, when it is identified with the sense of ‘I’, it is called ‘Ahamkāra’ or the ego.

[31] From the rajas of each of the five elements arises mouth, hands, feet, anus, and genitals. The rajas guna of the organs of action unite to become the five winds.

[32] Prāna wind resides in the heart, Apāna wind in the arms, Samāna wind resides in the navel, Udāna wind resides in the throat and Vyāna wind resides pervading all over the body.

[33] When the self is reflected on the pure māyā, it is called Ishvara whereas when the self is reflected on the impure māyā, it is called Jiva. The impure māyā conceals the true self whose nature is bliss.

[34] Ishvara creates the universe by using my power only. The gods and goddesses are imagined in me as a snake is conceived in a rope.

CHAPTER 3
DEVI COSMIC FORM

[1] Mother said: O King! This whole universe, moving and unmoving, is created by my māyā. The māyā in reality is not separate from me.

[2] Viewed practically, there is no such thing as the māyā, only one eternal self exists. I am that self of all.

[3] I create this entire universe in the eternal soul and enter it as the vital breath or the life force.

[4] O Mountain King! Unless I reside as the life force, how can this birth and death, leaving and retaking bodies, be possible?

[5] As the moon appears separately established inside various water filled pots, so I too appear in various forms due to māyā.

[6] As sun rays are not defiled when they illuminate various objects on the earth, so I too, am not defiled while entering into the various high and low beings.

[7] The ignorant people attach intellect and other activities to me, but this is not the thought of a wise person. I remain as a witness in all beings, not as a doer.

[8] The one all-pervading sky being enclosed within a container is called emptiness. Similarly, one all-pervading Ishvara is called Jiva being enclosed within a body.

[9] As the souls are conceived many by māyā but not in reality. So, the deities also are conceived many by māyā but not in essence.

[10] The ignorance is the root cause of differences in the creatures by creating differences in their bodies, sense organs, and minds.

[11] It is the māyā that differentiates between Brahmā, Vishnu, and Shiva. O King! The whole world is interwoven in me.

[12] I am the subtle soul. Also, I am the gross cosmic body. I am Sarasvati, Lakshmi and Pārvati. Also, I am Durgā, Kāli and Tārā.

[13] I am the sun and the moon. I am the stars and planets as well. I am the humans and animals. I am an outcast and a thief as well.

[14] I am the virtuous one. Also, I'm the wicked one. I am the male, female, and neuter as well. There is no doubt about this.

[15] O King! Wherever there is anything seen or heard, I always exist there as a witness; within and without.

[16] The world cannot exist without a substance. And that substance is me only. There can be nothing else.

[17] There is nothing moving and unmoving that can exist without me. Hence, I am everything indeed.

[18] Himavān said: O Devi! If you are merciful towards me, then I wish to see your wonderful cosmic form.

[19] Sage said: Having heard his request, all the demigods rejoiced within their hearts and gladly praised Himavān.

[20] The auspicious one knowing the desire of her devotees showed the great cosmic form.

[21] The sun and the moon are her eyes. The day and night are her eyelids. The directions are her ears. The Ashvini twins are her nose. The fire is her mouth. The death is her large teeth. The affection is her small teeth.

[22] Māyā is her smile. The creation of the universe is her side-looks. The modesty is her upper lip. The greed is her lower lip.

[23] The Vedas is her speech. The wind is her life breath. The heaven and hell are her hands. The universe is her heart.

[24] The ocean is her belly. The Prajāpati is her reproductive organ. The unrighteousness is her back.

[25] The past and future are her legs. The childhood, youth, and old age are her ways of walking. The two twilights are her clothing.

[26] The mountains are her bones. The rivers are her veins, and the trees are the hairs on her body. The thunder is her hair-locks.

[27] O King! Brahmā is her creative power, Vishnu is her preserving power, and Shiva is her destroying power.

[28] Demigods began to behold her cosmic form with the astonished eyes. Thousands of fiery rays emitted from her form. She began to kiss the whole world with her lips.

[29] The two rows of teeth began to make horrible sounds. The fire came out of her eyes. The various weapons were seen in her hands.

[30] The thousands of heads and limbs were seen in that form. The crores of lightning flashes were blazing everywhere.

[31] Horrible and awful, the appearance looked terrific to the eyes, heart, and mind. The demigods began to utter the cries of horror.

[32] Demigods heart trembled and they were caught with stark fear. 'Here is the Devi, our mother and protector'. This thought vanished at once from their minds.

[33] Vedas that were on four sides of the Devi with a tremendous sound brought the demigods back to wakefulness, who had fainted due to extreme fear.

[34] The demigods having some patience began to chant hymns in the words choked with tears of love flowing from their eyes.

[35] Demigods said: O Devi! Please forgive our mistakes. Protect us, for though miserable we are born out of you.

[36] O Mother! Withhold your anger. We are very much terrified at the sight of your form. O Devi! We are ignorant beings. What prayers can we offer to you?

[37] Your powers and forms cannot be completely comprehended even by the great sages. Then, how can it be understood by us?

[38] Salutations to the eternal mother! You are the only one who is proved in the Vedānta as the supreme.

[39] Salutations to you! The self of all from whom the fire, the sun, and the moon have sprung. And all the medicinal plants have also sprung from you only.

[40] From you alone all the demigods, animals, birds, and humans have taken birth. Salutations to that self of all!

[41] We bow down again and again to your great form, Mahā Māyā, from whom have sprung the vital breath, food and drink.

[42] The one who is the source of life force, truth, faith, asceticism, continence, and the rules about what to do, what not to do.

[43] Salutations to your universal form from whom have sprung all the oceans, all the mountains, all the rivers, and all the plants.

[44] We bow down to your cosmic form from whom have originated the sacrifices, the donations, and the mantras.

[45] O Mahā Māyā! We bow down to your front, to your back, to the both sides, to your top, to your bottom, and to all the sides.

[46] O Mother! Kindly withdraw this extraordinary terrific form of yours. Please show us your kind and beautiful lovely form.

[47] Sage said: Seeing the demigods so afraid, the world mother out of compassion withdrew her horrific form and showed her beautiful appearance pleasing to the whole world.

[48] Her body became gentle. Her eyes emitted rays of kindness and her face was adorned with beautiful smiles.

[49] In one hand she held the noose and in another she held the goad. The two other hands made gestures to dispel fears and grant boons.

[50] Seeing that beautiful form of mother, the fear of the demigods dissolved completely. Their minds attained peace. They bowed down silently overwhelmed with joy.

CHAPTER 4

YOGA OF WISDOM

[1] Shakti said: O Demigods! You are not at all worthy to see this wonderful cosmic form. But it is my affection towards the devotees that I have shown to you this great form of mine.

[2] The study of the Vedas, the yoga, the austerities, the sacrifice, or any other discipline are quite incompetent to make this form visible to anybody. Nobody can see this form without my grace.

[3] O King! Now hear the instructions carefully. The real self is the only supreme thing in this world created by māyā. The ever desireless Ishvara becomes Jiva after assuming the doership.

[4] Jiva remains constantly involved in actions leading to virtues and vices. Thus, it goes into various wombs and attains different kinds of bodies. It enjoys happiness or sorrow according to own karma.

[5] Like a wheel that moves perpetually, the cycle of birth and death is endless. The ignorance alone is the root cause of this cycle. Desire comes out of ignorance and the action follows.

[6] O King! A person should strive tirelessly to get rid of ignorance. The goal of life is only achieved when the ignorance is destroyed and the divine wisdom can only destroy it.

[7] As darkness cannot dispel darkness. Similarly, the action born out of ignorance is ignorance itself. Hence, it is useless to expect that the ignorance can be destroyed by doing countless actions.

[8] The various actions are futile because people want more and more sensual enjoyment out of their actions. Attachment arises out of this desire which leads to great calamity.

[9] The authentic scriptures declare that the liberation comes only from divine knowledge. So, one should try to live one hundred years acquiring that knowledge.

[10] It is advised by scriptures to do actions that lead to knowledge. Hence, the action and knowledge can complement each other.

[11] But the wise say that the coexistence of action and knowledge is not possible just as darkness and light cannot be brought together.

[12] Therefore, O King! Dedicate all your actions to me and work ceaselessly until the complete purification of the mind is achieved.

[13] The dispassion and self-control arise in purity. Hence, until that point is reached, you have to work tirelessly. When you attain purity, the actions are not necessary.

[14] Once the purity of mind is achieved. The seeker must take refuge in a guru with complete devotion.

[15] The seeker should day and night without laziness listen, think, and deeply contemplate about Vedānta only.

[16] When the true self is realized, then a fearlessness should arise and thus you attain the eternal state.

[17] While studying Vedānta, you must understand the meaning of each word first, then the meaning of the sentence in its totality. If you practice in this manner, the knowledge of the eternal self is not very far away from you.

[18] The embodied soul and the supreme soul are one and the same. The essence of both words is pure consciousness. Out of ignorance, they appear different. Thus, realizing the oneness, the soul transcends duality and attains eternal bliss.

[19] The wise ones see the unity of Ātmā and Paramātmā. However, the meaning of the two words is different. Therefore, the essence of words must be taken according to the established scriptures.

[20] I am formless, omnipresent, and a witness of everything. My attractive body is nothing but a bag of excreta and urine.

[21] The body which you are considering worthy of love is nothing but skin, flesh, blood and bone. It is full of disgusting materials and hence not worthy of loving or getting attached.

[22] The gross body is full of māyā. Therefore, it is false yet it appears as real. O King! Know this to be my first limiting condition.

[23] The five sense organs, the five organs of action, the five winds, and the four internal organs; these combine to form the subtle body.

[24] The subtle body experiences pleasure and pain. Hence, this is my second limiting condition.

[25] The latent tendencies stored in a seed form out of ignorance is my third limiting condition. It appears as the causal body.

[26] When all the limiting conditions subside, only the supreme self remains. Within the body, the five bodily sheaths always exist.

[27] When the five bodily sheaths are discarded using the method of self-enquiry, the true self is realized.

[28] The true self is neither born nor dies. It is not killed even when the body is killed. It is unborn, eternal, and everlasting.

[29] If one wants to kill the soul and the other thinks that it can be killed, then both of them are ignorant.

[30] The soul subtler than the subtlest and greater than the greatest resides within the heart of every being. One who is free from desire and sorrow can only see its glory.

[31] Know the soul to be the owner, and the body to be the chariot. Know the mind to be the reins, and the charioteer as the intellect.

[32] The sense organs are like the horses. They stray from one object to another ceaselessly. And, the mind is the enjoyer.

[33] Those who are non-discriminating and impure fail to realize the true self, rather they are bound to the body and mind.

[34] Those who are always discriminating and pure realize the soul from which there is no return.

[35] The one whose intellect as charioteer is wise which keeps the senses under control by holding the reins of the mind tight, that one reaches my supreme state for sure.

[36] One should always meditate intensely to realize the nature of the eternal soul by listening, thinking, and contemplating.

[37] When by constant practice as mentioned above, one is fit to be absorbed in the real self, just before that one should understand the meaning of separate letters in the seed mantra of māyā.

[38] The seed mantra ‘Hrim’ has four seeds; ‘Ha’, ‘Ra’, ‘Ee’, and ‘M’. The letter ‘Ha’ means the gross body, the letter ‘Ra’ means the subtle body, the letter ‘Ee’ means the causal body, and the nasal ‘M’ is the fourth state represented by a dot.

[39] Thus, the intelligent one should meditate on the aforesaid three seeds in the cosmic body. One should then try to establish a relation between the whole, its parts, and their unity.

[40] After carefully thinking about the above, one should close one’s eyes and meditate on me, the supreme ruler of the universe.

[41] O King! After putting a full stop to worldly desires, one should equalize the inhalation and exhalation.

[42] With devotion, one should dissolve the gross body denoted by the letter ‘Ha’ into ‘Ra’, the subtle body.

[43] Further, one should dissolve the subtle body denoted by ‘Ra’ into ‘Ee’, the causal body. One should then dissolve the causal body denoted by ‘Ee’ into ‘M’, the fourth state.

[44] The fourth state is free from all the dualities. It is the form of existence, intelligence, and bliss. Reflect upon it within the flame of pure consciousness.

[45] O King! By practicing the above meditation, anyone can perceive me directly and become one with me.

[46] Thus, the firmly resolved intelligent person by the practice of yoga realizes the eternal self and immediately destroys the ignorance.

CHAPTER 5

YOGA AND MANTRA

[1] Himavān said: O Mother! Now tell me about the yoga with all its limbs which gives the knowledge of self when practiced correctly.

[2] Devi said: The yoga does not exist in heavens, nor does it exist on earth or in the worlds below. Those who know say that the realization of the unity of Ātmā and Paramātmā is called 'Yoga' or the union.

[3] O Sinless One! The enemies to yoga are eight and they are shame, fear, desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride, and jealousy.

[4] The yogi break through the eight enemies by practicing the eight limbs of yoga tirelessly.

[5] The eight limbs are restraint, observance, correct-posture, breath-control, withdrawal, concentration, meditation, and absorption.

[6] Non-violence, celibacy, truthfulness, non-stealing, forgiveness, non-possessiveness, fortitude, compassion, honesty, and moderation in food are the ten restraints.

[7] Belief in the soul, studying authentic scriptures, mantra chanting, fasting, charity, cleanliness, introspection, austerity, contentment, and humility are the ten observances.

[8] There is a total of five correct-posture that should be practiced; Padmāsana, Svastikāsana, Bhadrāsana, Vajrāsana, and Virāsana.

[9] Padmāsana consists of crossing the legs; placing the feet on the opposite thighs and then sitting straight with ease.

[10] Padmāsana is always recommended by the advanced yogis. One can raise the body in air using this posture.

[11] Place the soles of the feet completely under the thighs, keep the body straight, and sit with ease. This is called the Svastikāsana.

[12] Bhadrāsana consists of placing the heels near anus and catching those heels by the hands while sitting straight with ease. This is very much liked by the yogis.

[13] Vajrāsana consists of resting the buttocks on heels and placing the hands down on thighs, and then sitting straight with ease.

[14] Virāsana consists of sitting cross on the hams and resting the buttocks on the ground while sitting at ease with the body straight.

[15] Inhale the breath using the left nostril as long as we count sixteen times. Thereon, hold it firmly as long as we count sixty-four times. Finally, exhale it slowly using the right nostril as long as we count thirty-two times. Again, repeat the process in the same order.

[16] The complete process of breath inhaling, holding, and exhaling together is called breath-control.

[17] Each inhalation chants ‘So’ and each exhalation chants ‘Ham’. The yogi must repeat it mentally while practicing breath-control. The mantra ‘Soham’ is composed of two words; ‘Saḥ’ means ‘That’ and ‘Aham’ means ‘I’.

[18] When breath-control is practiced repeatedly, perspiration comes first when it is of the lowest stage; when the body begins to tremble, it is called middling; and when one rises in the air leaving the ground, it is called the highest stage.

[19] The senses travel spontaneously toward their objects as if they are without anyone to check. To curb the senses and to make them turn backward from those objects is called withdrawal.

[20] To hold the vital breath on the toes, heels, knees, thighs, genitals, navel, heart, throat, nose, between eyebrows, and above head; at these eleven places is called concentration.

[21] The state of continuous contemplation on the self through the concentration on a divine light is called meditation.

[22] Absorption is the state of complete identification with the divine in which there's no difference between Ātmā and Paramātmā.

[23] Thus, I have described in detail about all the eight limbs of yoga.

[24] O King! The gross body is the essence of the sun, the moon, and the stars composed of the five elements.

[25] There are seventy-two thousand nerves in the human body; out of which major are ten. Out of ten again, three are the most important.

[26] The foremost of the three is 'Sushumnā' situated in the center of the spinal cord. On the left side of it is the 'Idā' of the female nature, representing the moon. On the right side is the 'Pingalā' of the male nature, representing the sun.

[27] There is a cobweb-like formation in the innermost area of the Sushumnā, which is located at the base of spine.

[28] Above that is the seed mantra of māyā, the form of ‘Ha’, ‘Ra’, ‘Ee’, and nasal ‘M’. Above that is the dormant kundalini energy appearing like a flame. It is declared to be my essence.

[29] Outside it is a four petaled lotus of the red color comprising the four letters ‘va’, ‘sa’, ‘sha’, ‘scha’. This lotus is called the ‘Mulādhāra Chakra’, which supports all other lotuses.

[30] Above it is the ‘Svādhisṭhāna Chakra’ having orange color, which emits luster like a diamond and has six petals representing the six letters ‘ba’, ‘bha’, ‘ma’, ‘ya’, ‘ra’, ‘la’.

[31] Above it is the ‘Manipura Chakra’ having yellow color and is very fiery. It comprises ten petals representing the ten letters ‘ḍa’, ‘ḍha’, ‘ṇa’, ‘ta’, ‘tha’, ‘da’, ‘dha’, ‘na’, ‘pa’, ‘pha’.

[32] This lotus resembles a fully developed pearl. Hence, it is also called as ‘Manipadma’. Lord Vishnu dwells here.

[33] Above it is the ‘Anāhata Chakra’ having green color, which has twelve petals representing the twelve letters ‘ka’, ‘kha’, ‘ga’, ‘gha’, ‘ṅa’, ‘ca’, ‘cha’, ‘ja’, ‘jha’, ‘ña’, ‘ṭa’, ‘ṭha’.

[34] This lotus emits sound without being struck, and is situated in the heart. Here dwells Lord Shiva. This chakra is very famous among the common people.

[35] Above it is the ‘Vishuddha Chakra’ of sixteen petals comprising the sixteen letters ‘a’, ‘ā’, ‘i’, ‘ī’, ‘u’, ‘ū’, ‘ṛ’, ‘ṝ’, ‘ḷ’, ‘ḹ’, ‘ae’, ‘ai’, ‘o’, ‘au’, ‘aṃ’, ‘aḥ’.

[36] This lotus is of a smoky blue color, highly lustrous, and situated in the throat. Jiva experiences the divine here and gets purified.

[37] Above that is situated, between eyebrows, the beautiful ‘Āgyā Chakra’ with two petals comprising the two letters ‘ha’ and ‘ksha’.

[38] When people are situated here, they can see everything and know the past, present, and future. Also, one starts getting the commands directly from the divine.

[39] The yogis say above it is the ‘Sahasrāra Chakra’ with a thousand petals, the seat of the supreme goddess. O King! Thus, I have declared the best of the paths leading to yoga.

[40] First, by the inhalation process, fix the mind on the mulādhāra. Then, contract and arouse the kundalini energy by using air between the anus and genitals.

[41] One attains to the highest state by piercing through the various chakra all the way to the thousand petalled lotus at the crown of head.

[42] As a result, a kind of nectar is produced. That nectar of joy, the wise yogis offer to the māyā to drink in exchange for yielding success in the path of yoga.

[43] After pleasing all the demigods in the six chakras with offerings of that nectar, the yogi brings the energy back to the mulādhāra.

[44] O Child! The practice of breath-control is most important. There is no doubt about this. I have thus described the most excellent yoga.

[45] Now hear from me the yoga of concentration. To fix thoroughly one's mind on the supreme light of mine, transcending the space and time leads soon to the union of Ātmā and Paramātmā.

[46] If one doesn't succeed in the yoga due to impurities of the mind, then the yogi must adopt what is called 'Avayava Yoga'.

[47] O King! The devotee must fix the mind on my lotus feet, gentle hands, and the other parts one by one. And, try to master each place. Thus, the mind would be purified. Then one should fix that purified mind on my whole body.

[48] The yogi should practice with the mantras till the mind is not dissolved in me, or my consciousness.

[49] By the practice of meditating on mantras, the thing to be known by Vedas is transformed into knowledge.

[50] Know this as certain that the mantras are futile without yoga and the yoga is futile without mantras. The mantra and yoga are two infallible means to realize the true self.

[51] As a pot surrounded by the darkness is visible using a lamp, the divine surrounded by the māyā is visible using a mantra.

[52] You should receive the teachings from the mouth of a guru or else the millions of scriptures will never be able to give you a true realization of the eternal self.

CHAPTER 6
WIDOM OF SELF

[1] Shakti said: O Himavān! Assuming a comfortable posture with a devotion that is completely sincere, one should meditate on me.

[2] It is manifest and near. Also, pervading in the heart of all beings. It is the well-known highest goal.

[3] It is beyond being and non-being, higher than the wisdom. It is the best adoration for everyone. It is smaller than the smallest and yet, the foundation of all the worlds. It is the imperishable 'Brahma'.

[4] It is the creator and revealer of sacred knowledge. It is real and immortal. Know that it is the sole goal of the entire creation.

[5] Taking the bow of scriptures, the arrow of the mind sharpened by concentration, drawing it with the target as the imperishable self.

[6] The target is achieved only by those who are always immersed in listening, thinking, and contemplating about the eternal self.

[7] Know it to be one support of all. Discard all other thoughts, since the divine is the only refuge for the mortals.

[8] Meditate on the supreme self as eternal 'Om' with all its attributes to acquire the knowledge of the divine, who is beyond darkness and also who is self-luminous. Thus, your welfare will be ensured.

[9] The supreme self is to be meditated upon as the controller of the mind and guide of the senses. When it manifests itself as existence and bliss, it is experienced by wise through the purity of the mind.

[10] All doubts are completely removed and all fruits of past action are destroyed when the true self is realized.

[11] Brahma, the indivisible reality, is the supreme truth. The knower of the truth claims it to be the light of the lights.

[12] The sun does not shine nor does the moon and the stars shine in its absence. When it shines everything shines, by its light everything becomes manifest.

[13] The supreme light alone is immortal. It pervades all directions; front and behind, right and left, above and below.

[14] The one who is completely merged in the eternal self is always satisfied and is considered the best among all. That one never grieves nor desires anything.

[15] O King! The fear arises from the idea of a second. Where there is no second, the fear ceases to exist. Since I am not separate from the self, the self is also not separate from me.

[16] O Himavān! Know that I am the eternal one. The vision of me is possible only there, where my devotees chant my prayers and wise ones abide in my essence. Neither do I dwell in any sacred place of pilgrimage nor do I live in the ‘Kailāsha’ or the ‘Vaikuntha’ or in any other place. I reside in the lotus heart of my devotee.

[17] One who worships me even once by knowing my true essence, that gets a crore times fruit. That person's family becomes blessed and the whole bloodline is rendered pure.

[18] O Himavān! I told you everything that you had asked about the wisdom of self. Now, nothing remains to be described further. The one whose heart is completely merged in the supreme consciousness purifies the whole world. There is no doubt about this.

[19] The divine wisdom should be imparted to only those who are of good character, well-versed in authentic scriptures, and completely devoted to a deity. This mustn't be given to any other type of person.

[20] A person who is fully devoted to one's deity and who is equally devoted to one's guru, in such a fortunate one only this wisdom takes root and grows without much effort.

[21] Verily, that is divine itself who advises this knowledge to others. No one can repay the debts of such a guru.

[22] The scriptures rank a guru higher than parents, since the second birth given by the guru is eternal and imperishable.

[23] The scriptures conclude that the guru who gives the knowledge of the eternal self is the supreme.

[24] Since, when the deity is angered, the guru can protect. But, when the guru is angered, even the deity cannot save us. Hence, the guru must be served with utmost devotion.

[25] The guru must be served by body, mind, and word. One should always try to please the guru in all possible manner. Otherwise, if a guru becomes unmerciful, then certainly no one can save you.

[26] O Himavān! It is very difficult to acquire the divine knowledge. Hear a story now. A saint of the Atharvana family went to the Indra and prayed for the supreme knowledge.

[27] Indra said: I would give you the eternal knowledge but if you impart it to anybody, I would sever your head. He agreed to this and Indra gave him the highest knowledge.

[28] After a few days, two Ashvins came to him and prayed for that knowledge. He humbly turned down their request by saying that his head would be cut off, if he disclosed this wisdom to anyone.

[29] Ashvins said: We will cut your head now and keep it elsewhere, and we will attach the head of a horse to your body. Instruct us with that head and when Indra will cut off your head, we will place your former head.

[30] The saint pleased with their intellect gave them the knowledge. Indra cut off his head using a thunderbolt. When the horse-head of the saint was cut off, the two Ashvins replaced it with his original head. This story is widely known in the Vedas.

CHAPTER 7
YOGA OF DEVOTION

[1] Himavān said: O Divine Mother! Now describe yoga of devotion to me, by which even an ordinary person having no dispassion at all reaches the knowledge of the eternal self easily.

[2] Devi said: O King! There are two paths widely known since time immemorial leading to the moksha. These are the path of knowledge and the path of devotion or complete surrender.

[3] Of the two paths, the path of devotion is most suitable because anyone can practice this by concentrating the mind on divine without any suffering to the body. The devotion is of three kinds as there are three gunas in the nature.

[4] When one worships me to cause harm to others; being filled with ego, jealousy, and anger. This is called tāmasika devotion.

[5] When one worships me to fulfil their desires, but does not wish to cause harm to others. This is called rājasika devotion.

[6] The rājasika person desirous of sex, money, and power; thinking oneself to be different from me, worships me with great devotion.

[7] When people worship me to purify their sins, perform actions that are authorized by the authentic scriptures, also offer to me the fruit of all their actions. This is called sāttvika devotion.

[8] The sāttvika people thinking themselves to be separate from me, perform all their actions for the sake of my love.

[9] The sāttvika devotion leads to supreme devotion. The rājasika and tāmasika devotion do not lead to the supreme devotion, since they are tainted by selfishness.

[10] Now, you hear attentively about the supreme devotion that I am going to describe.

[11] Those who always hear my glories and chant my names. All the auspicious qualities flow steadily into them as a stream of oil flows steadily into a vessel.

[12] The supreme devotees do not want the fruit of their actions and do not seek moksha. They have no motive at all.

[13] They are filled with devotion for me only, worship me alone, and know nothing other than me to serve. They are least interested in the liberation even. They think about me tirelessly. Knowing me as not separate from themselves. They are my supreme devotees.

[14] They consider all beings as me and love me more than oneself. They do not make any difference between beings and myself as they find the same consciousness manifested in all.

[15] They do not fight with anyone as they have abandoned all ideas about separateness.

[16] They always bow down and worship from the lowest beings to the supreme one. They never wish to cause harm to anyone.

[17] They become filled with devotion whenever they see my sacred places and my devotees, hear the scriptures describing my deeds, and whenever they meditate on my mantras.

[18] They get goosebumps overwhelmed with love for me and tears of love flow incessantly from their eyes. They chant my names and my deeds in a voice choked with the feelings of love.

[19] O King! They worship me as the mother of this universe and the cause of all the causes.

[20] They perform all my vows and sacrifices, daily and occasional duties without showing any miserly feeling in their expenditure.

[21] They naturally long to perform my festivities and to visit places where my festivals are held.

[22] They sing my name loudly and dance being intoxicated with my love having no idea of egoism and devoid of bodily feelings.

[23] They think that according to the law of karma whatever are the results of their past actions would surely manifest without a doubt.

[24] Therefore, they should not be much worried about the future and focus on their present karma. This type of devotion is called supreme devotion indeed.

[25] The person whose heart is filled with supreme devotion, that one would get immediately dissolved in my state of consciousness.

[26] The sages call this state of consciousness as wisdom. When this wisdom arises, the devotion and dispassion get their ends satisfied.

[27] When the ego crops up due to one’s past karma, although that person has surrendered the fruits of all actions. Then, the supreme wisdom doesn’t arise, but that person goes to my abode because of devotion to me.

[28] One enjoys all the objects of desire in my abode, and at the end acquires my knowledge, by that attains to the liberation. Without my knowledge, the liberation is not possible.

[29] One who has realized the eternal self does not take rebirth after leaving the present body.

[30] Out of ignorance, one searches for a cap that is already on the head. Similarly, one searches for the self which is already oneself.

[31] O King! My form is different from the known and the unknown. The image of the real self is seen in a body as the image of the body is seen in a mirror.

[32] As the difference between darkness and light is absolutely clear, so in my abode, the knowledge that arises out of oneness is absolute and devoid of duality.

[33] The one who leaves this body without attaining wisdom, although that person was dispassionate and practiced yoga regularly, resides in the abode of Brahmā for a very long time.

[34] Then, that one takes birth in a pure hearted prosperous family and again practicing yoga finally acquires my knowledge.

[35] O King! The divine wisdom arises after many births. It may not come in one birth. So, one should try best to acquire this wisdom.

[36] Attaining the rare human birth, if one doesn’t strive tirelessly for the divine knowledge, then this birth will be entirely a waste.

[37] For this human birth is very hard to attain, and then the birth in a ‘Brahmin’ family is rarer. Moreover, among the brahmins as well, the complete knowledge of the Vedas is very rare.

[38] Tranquility, control of the senses, contentment, endurance, faith, burning desire for liberation, the acquisition of a real guru and success in yoga; all these are very hard to attain in this life.

[39] The desire for the liberation takes birth in only those who have acquired countless merits in the past crores of births.

[40] As clarified butter resides hidden in the milk, so this knowledge resides hidden in everyone. With mind as churning rod, the churning should be done tirelessly. Therefore, slowly the divine knowledge of the imperishable self would be attained.

[41] Having attained this divine wisdom, one is absolutely fulfilled. There is no doubt about this. Thus, I have described everything.

[42] Sage said: After preaching on all the possible subjects, the divine mother blessed everyone and then disappeared.